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BREAKFAST AT HAAS PARK

Breakfast at Haas Park

The Story of an American Family



With Photographs



by Evangeline Haas Cummings

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BREAKFAST AT HAAS PARK

❧ CHAPTER ONE ❧

MICHIGAN IS LOCATED in the heart of the Great Lakes region. It is colorful, varied and interesting. Its climate is somewhat like that of New York State and New England. The Indians figured largely in its early history and gave many things of great value to the white man. The first white men to visit Michigan were missionaries, explorers, and traders.

This great state is divided into what are commonly referred to as the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. Along the north shore of the Upper Peninsula lies Lake Superior, while along its southern boundary and separating it from the Lower Peninsula lies Lake Michigan, the Straits of Mackinac, and Lake Huron.

Houghton County, which is in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, was named by the state legislature to honor one of its most distinguished citizens, Professor Douglas Houghton, who had been assigned the task of exploring the Upper Peninsula in an effort to locate the vast mineral resources. He met his death by drowning off Keweenaw Point in Lake Superior in 1845 while at his post of duty during the geological survey of the mineral fields of the Upper Peninsula.

After the revolution of 1848 in Germany, many immigrants from that country came to America and settled, mostly in the Saginaw Valley of the Lower Peninsula and in Keweenaw County of the Upper Peninsula. These were mainly young people who came from the best educated and

progressive families in Germany imbued with the spirit of liberty and justice. Also, Finns came to the Upper Peninsula in great numbers because of the failure of crops in their home country and the oppression from the Russian Government. They were a quiet, hard-working, progressive people who worked on the farms and in the mines.

The Haas family consisted of three boys and three girls, and their father and mother, Adam and Eve Haas. I mention Adam and Eve, my grandfather and grandmother, for my own father and mother were named Joseph and Josephine, a very unusual coincidence. My mother's family (Haun) came from Kromenthal, Bavaria, Germany, with three girls and two boys. These two families settled in Keweenaw County and later moved to the town of Houghton, Michigan. Houghton lies between two hills on the banks of Portage Lake, and we lived on the outskirts of the town, about one and one half miles on a sixteen acre plot. I often wonder why, because my parents had borne sixteen children. For many years twelve to fourteen dined at the breakfast table. This was quite a sight to see. In this dining room there were two tables, one oblong and the other round. The younger children, as many as seven or eight, sat at the round table, while at the other table were Mother and Dad and the older ones. Two of the older girls took turns serving. The younger ones were taught to be quiet, seen but not heard.

Now I will take you back to the time when my father was at the age of sixteen. This was the period of the great Civil War. My father enlisted as a drummer boy in the northern army when President Lincoln called for volunteers. He stayed in the army until he was mustered out at the end of the war. At that time he had the opportunity to shake hands with President Lincoln. He experienced many real hardships and was wounded during one of the battles. When we were grown up he would get out the old Civil



Haas family and our faithful old horse called "Prince."



Part of Haas family.

War book and read to us and explain the different battles he had been in and how the men would march from day to day without much food. He told how their clothes were dusty and dirty and their shoes worn through. Often while waiting for new supplies to reach them they would have to wrap their feet in burlap. He mentioned that on many occasions he marched with General Grant and that the General would say to him, "Do not worry, little fellow. We will see it through." And so they did. Shortly after his return from war Mother and Dad were married. Mother was just sixteen and dad was nineteen. He decided to go to work for his father, Adam Haas, who was then in the brewery business. This brewery was established in Houghton in 1859 in a log building at the corner of Sheldon and Dodge streets with a small output of about five hundred barrels a year, but which gradually was increased year after year. By 1875 the output had reached six thousand barrels per year. This company, known as the *A. Haas Brewing Company*, was a family affair, the various members of which were Joseph, Adolph an uncle and four aunts, Eva, Lilly, Gretchen, and Francis. Father worked hard to raise this large family while Mother was a very good planner and brought the children up to help one another. Each had his or her work assigned to him. As the children grew up the eldest boy, Rudolph, who was born February 16th, 1868, was sent to college to learn bookkeeping. When he finished his course he returned home and became head bookkeeper in my father's office. The second oldest boy, Albert, was born August 3, 1871. After finishing grammar school he went to work in the brewery with Dad and was later the head brewer. The oldest girl at home was Josephine, later becoming Mrs. Dengler. She was born September 15, 1869.

At this point I will enumerate the children in order and mention their births and deaths:

Rudolph	February 16, 1868	died 1906
Josephine . . .	September 15, 1869	" 1916
Albert	August 3, 1871	" 1907
Frank	August 4, 1873	" 1957
Harriet	August 22, 1875	
Florence	June 17, 1877	
Blanche	August 10, 1879	" 1887
Mata	August 8, 1881	
Rose	August 5, 1883	
Laura	December 19, 1885	" 1947
Evangeline . . .	October 11, 1886	
Chassel	August 30, 1887	" 1888
Ralph	October 20, 1889	
Valerie	January 3, 1891	" 1930
Hulbert	January 11, 1893	" 1941
Marcella	March 30, 1895	

Evangeline was the seventh daughter in succession. There were seven birthdays in August.

Seven of us girls always took our turns to get up early and get the breakfast. In those early days we cooked on a wood stove. Our brother Frank would make the kindling wood to start the fire. It was a piece of wood whittled very thin, almost to the end of the stick, just far enough so it would be in one piece. We always cooked a hot cereal such as oatmeal, cornmeal, hominy, wheat cakes, eggs, toast, and coffee. We were a very energetic group of children with good appetites. Mother always sat at the table while each one came for breakfast. In that way she had a little time to visit and advise each one.

Sunday morning breakfast was a little more elaborate. The tables were set at night because we always went to church Sunday morning. The two tables were laden with spotless linen and napkins. First we were served a bowl of oyster stew and little round crackers, I am very fond of the fried oysters to this day. Eggs were served almost every style

with bacon and ham, bread and butter, jam, lots of jam.

Our next meal, dinner, which was always served at six in the evening, consisted of some kind of fowl; turkey, chicken, or duck. Mother always planned to cook two turkeys, about 15 pounds each, as she said that two turkeys reached farther than one large one. The desert was almost always vanilla or chocolate ice cream. Four quarts of each were made in two freezers. This task fell to my oldest sister. The reason that we had so much ice cream was because we kept two or three cows. Speaking of cream, my brother Frank, had to do the milking and we younger ones would like to watch him. He would catch us unawares and squirt the milk at us. He had a large pan nearby, and when he finished milking he would fill the pan with milk for the kittens.

After Frank grew up and started to go to college, (Michigan School of mines), he said to Dad one day, "Father, you will have to get someone else to milk the cows." Father asked, "What's the trouble Son?" He said, "I smell like a cow barn in school and they don't like it." So father hired a man to work for us and that was the end of his chore. A small cottage was built for the hired help to live in and he partook of his meals in our summer kitchen. Then Frank had to pile wood in a large wood shed, a task that had to be done mostly at night. He would get us younger girls to help him and would pay us five or ten cents. We were always paying each other to do errands or selling our desserts if it were something we did not care too much about.

The oldest girl was Harriet, a blond who was very kind and never with a care or worry. Florence, a beautiful brunette with blue eyes, was the next girl. These two sisters were great pals and were always together. Florence was an excellent cook and could make the most delicious maple

mousse and chocolate torte. After graduation she stayed at home to help mother. Blanche, born August 10, 1879, lived to be seven years old. Then came Mata and Rose. Mata graduated and remained at home to help mother, but Rose went to Chicago and studied art and graduated from the Art Institute. Laura was a stenographer. I came next, the seventh girl in succession. I graduated from Houghton High School and Marquette Normal, then taught school seven years.

Next came Chassel. He received his name from a man called Mr. Chassel who sold the land to Dad. A little town eight miles from here was also named after this man. This little brother died at the age of two. Ralph was next in line and he also was a graduate of Houghton High School. He completed his schooling in Chicago. Valerie, another graduate from Houghton High, studied art. Hulbert, after finishing his schooling, worked in Houghton. Marcella, born March 30, 1896, was the sixteenth child. Last but not least, she was a brilliant girl and is now married to George Arrow-smith from England. She received her education at Green Bay, Wisconsin.

❧ CHAPTER TWO ❧

AT THE ENTRANCE TO OUR HOME was a large gate. From this gate were two roads leading through sixteen acres of land. One was called the high road, and the other the low road. Many times we would have a race to see who would reach home first, some taking the high road and some taking the low road. Our place was called HAAS PARK. It was located one and one-half miles from the town of Houghton, among

a wooded area of pines, hemlocks, spruces, birch and maples, with a very beautiful stream of rippling waters flowing gently through, banked at the end of the property with a dam which dad stocked with speckled trout. The park was enclosed with a wire fence and one acre was set aside and enclosed to house deer, often as many as fourteen. How we loved to feed them and call them by name! Many were very tame, but the bucks were cross.

Spring! What a beautiful time of year with all the trees budding, apple blossoms and lilacs and crocuses peeping through, and violets. We loved to pick them. At this time of season we would watch for the little fawns. They would be covered with little white spots, and such a joy it was to see them follow their mothers around, hardly able to walk.

Spring meant house cleaning time, and this was a big job. We had a very large home with six bedrooms and bathroom upstairs and one large bedroom downstairs. Downstairs had a double living room, dining room and kitchen, also a summer kitchen with a large woodshed. All rooms were carpeted from wall to wall. These carpets were all taken up, one room at a time. The mattresses were cleaned and put to air for several days. They were brought in at night and put on the clean floors; we would love to sleep on the floor. We would invite our cousins to come and have a slumber party. It was such fun. We would talk and tell stories half the night. Finally Mother would call and tell us to settle down for the night.

During the first warm rains we would go to the woods to hunt for mushrooms. The kind most familiar to us was the Morel, a large brown mushroom like a sponge. These were very delicious, made with scrambled eggs. Mother soaked them overnight in salt water and the next morning they were drained and put in clean water to boil ten minutes, drained again, and then put in a hot pan with butter topped

with beaten eggs and scrambled. This made a good breakfast dish.

At the ages of eight and ten we used to play house in the trees. We would climb out as far as we could until it would bend with our weight; then we'd jump to the ground.

About this time, my two older sisters were being courted. How we loved to see their boy friends come. They brought large boxes of candy called Allegreties. These were very dark chocolate with creamy white centers, made in Chicago, and very delicious. They were generous sisters and would pass the candy around. By the time it got back, the box was very low in contents.

Father would go on long hunting trips and be away for over a week at a time. On his return he would bring partridge, rabbits, and almost always a deer. He did his own dressing and cutting of his deer and gave all his good friends some. We all liked the venison steaks best.

In the summertime, Mother would give her parties which were held in the park. From sixty to seventy women were invited. It generally took a week to prepare for this luncheon. She had a beautiful garden and was very proud of it. It was an acre of land, fenced off with a wire fence. There were three paths and on either side were currant bushes; red, white, and black currants. When they were ripe we picked them and Mother would send pails of them to her good neighbors. We did not like to pick them to send away because it was so hard to pick so many, but other days we would pick for Mother's own use.

We had many cherry trees. My two older sisters who were married would come and spend the day picking cherries for themselves to can and they would take all the stems off so they were able to get more in their pails.

In this town lived an old Irish lady, and she would come to our place for flowers to take up to the cemetery to put

on her husband's grave. She was called Maggie Green and all that knew her gave her clothes, as that was her hobby.

One day my sister Mata got under the kitchen table where Maggie was sitting having a lunch and counted the number of skirts she was wearing. She counted eight. When we sisters get together now, each has a different tale to tell of some little incident that stands out in our minds.

To clothe so many children was an ordeal. We had a very fine seamstress of German extraction who would come for two months in the spring of the year and two months in the fall of the year and would stay right at our house. We always ate breakfast early, then we gave her a little lunch at ten or ten thirty in the morning. Noon lunch at twelve thirty, and then again in the afternoon at three thirty coffee. And at six o'clock we had our dinner. We could always depend on this very good and faithful servant. She was always ready to sew on other special occasions. She was in mother's employ for thirty-two years.

One of my younger brothers tells of a certain day our cow got away and went down through the town, across the Portage Lake Bridge to the neighboring town of Hancock. In this town my mother's sister lived from whom she bought the cow. On the way home crossing the bridge the draw opened to let an ore boat go through. One brother leading stopped abruptly and the younger brother, bringing up the rear, bumped into the back end of the cow. He was busy watching the boat pass by and paid no attention to where he was going. We always get a good laugh when they tell this story.

In the summertime the deer were very tame and would come and eat out of our hands. One especially whom we called Pet was allowed out of the corral. One day she walked up on the veranda and into the house, right up the front stairs to my mother's sewing room. We were very care-

ful and helped her down the stairs, afraid she might break her legs.

At one time Father bought us a beautiful St. Bernard dog. He arrived in a large wooden cage. What a big face and head we thought. We were frightened at first, but after Father let him out and he jumped and romped around, we all became great friends and pals. He would follow us to school and several times we were sent home because he took up so much room in the aisle. The minute the dog heard our school bell ring he made one getaway toward the school. Sometimes Mother would try to keep him locked up until she thought we were at school, then she let him out. We also had a dark brown Shetland pony just about the same height. The first day I drove it to town she rolled on Main Street. I felt so embarrassed. Two men ran out from the side walk and got her on her feet again after a very stubborn pull. I drove her back home. That was my last ride, for I just handed the pony over to my younger sister.

In the summertime, just as soon as school was out for vacation, our first ordeal was to go picking wild strawberries. We drove in a surrey for five or six miles. This vehicle was a covered top carriage with two seats, both facing forward, the top being decorated with fringe. Each of us carried a pail and a dumper (that was a small measuring cup). Then mother handed out a piece of gum to each one. This was so we would not eat so many berries, and she would have more to preserve. After strawberry picking came raspberry picking time. They were easier to pick and we would bring home as many as thirty to forty quarts. They were cleaned and picked over and one of the older sisters would make fresh pies for our dinner that night, generally four pies and topped with ice cream. The rest of the berries went for jam and wine. Mother made excellent wine which

she served at dinner. Some had beer, but most of us liked wine. Then came the little pin cherries and the high bush blackberry, also made into wine. Wine making was a long ordeal as it had to stand in kegs for a considerable time before it could be bottled. It was nearly winter time when my brother Frank would have to spend an evening or two in the basement, syphoning off from the kegs into the bottles.

Pickling time came in the fall. Chow-chow or as they now call it, mustard pickles, was made in a large wooden tub. The little white onions were prepared the night before, and two or three girls would sit and peel them. It would make our eyes water. Mother gave us a little piece of bread to hold between our teeth. The next day a hot mustard dressing was made and poured over the mixed vegetables and spices, then bottled for winter use. Many of her near acquaintances would come and buy several quarts of this chow-chow. It was the best made. A rule at our house was to peel the potatoes thick, as the parings were fed to the cows and deer. We also fed them malt. This was a product made from the types left from making beer. No turnip greens were fed to the cattle as it tainted the milk.

❧ CHAPTER THREE ❧

THE FAMILY DOCTOR was a very fine and most wonderful man. He came any time when called, day or night. I know every child had the measles. We were put in a wooden tub in one of the bedrooms. The tub was filled with hot water, and four would stand in at one time. A blanket was thrown over our heads and we had to stay this way for five or six

minutes until perspiration started. Then we were hustled into our warm bed. In this manner the measles came out. One was not too sick too long, and no bad effects were left. The same with scarlet fever. Only two or three had that, which is a more dangerous illness. When we had to be vaccinated, the doctor would come to the house and we all stood in the living room in a line. Some of us were frightened, but he did not hurt.

Our first sad moment was when the men were called to arms during the Spanish-American War. The oldest boy, Rudolph, was an officer, and on the day he was to leave, my next oldest brother, Albert, enlisted. He wanted to go along too, and went as a cook. At this he was well accomplished. Father was very angry at first because he joined up, but that passed and he was sad to see them go. School was let out at noon that day and the town turned out with music and cheer to see the boys off. They saw real hardships. The letters we would write to them were used by them for paper to write to us by turning the envelopes inside out. The food and water supply was very low. I distinctly remember Father making us eat everything on our plates, mentioning how much our brothers would love that piece of crust. Before the war was over, the oldest boy was sent home from Cuba. He had contracted malaria and was very ill. The day he was to arrive home, we received a telegram from Washington about nine in the morning, and he arrived at noon. So there was quite a scurry in our house as well as the town. News traveled fast in this little community. The band was out and all the townsfolks were at the depot. He was very tired and weak and was carried high upon the shoulders of two men so the people would all see him. He was the first boy to return home. Everyone that had sons away were anxious for a word from him. He was immediately taken home. All the rest of that day there was a continual stream

of people coming out to our home. It was an open house during that day and evening. About six months after all the boys returned, including my other brother, Albert, happiness reigned once more. By now the family was quite grown up. The oldest boy and girl were married and blessed with their little families. The second boy never married, but went west speculating in land. After being away several years, he was stricken with pneumonia and died. He was shipped back to Houghton for a military burial.

The little stream that flowed in front of our home was dammed off with a six foot wall. Here we could fish for speckled trout. These were stocked each spring, and it was a great sport to go fishing so near the home. After we grew up and started entertaining our boy friends, we would go and fish, then take them to the house, clean them, and have a midnight snack. That was when the fish really tasted good!

My brother Ralph had a hobby making root beer. He made it by putting five gallons of water in a six gallon jar with five pounds of sugar and one bottle of Hires root beer extract and letting this stand for two days in a warm place. He would then bottle it and place it in a cool place until ready to drink.

Sometimes he and Hulbert would make a little stand near the home and sell the root beer for five cents a glass, but I think they drank more than they sold. Ralph also tapped the maple trees for sap to make maple syrup and sugar. He would gather the sap from the buckets he had nailed to the trees and carry it to the kitchen in large water pails and into a big iron kettle on the stove. This he kept continuously boiling until it was ready for use. He was often late for school in the morning, so he told his teacher why he was late and promised her some maple syrup, which he gave her. The sap gathering lasted about

three weeks or until the sap stopped running. Boiling the sap down into maple syrup continued into the night and was more of a simmering process than hard boiling. He entered a bottle of syrup at the County fair as an exhibit and won first prize against twelve other entries. Mother was very proud of him.

❧ CHAPTER FOUR ❧

IT WAS GREAT FUN after several years; the older ones were married and would come home on Sundays for dinner, each with two or three children. There were as many as thirty-two for dinner and had to be served in relays. Every one helped with the serving and the cleaning up of so many dishes. We had a very large kitchen.

In the afternoon we would play baseball. This family game amused my brother Frank who was a good player and was on the town team playing catcher. Other games we played were Duck on the Rock, Croquet, and Hide and Go Seek. In the winter time we would go to one of the bedrooms and play marbles. I do remember having a nice new green coat with round buttons the shape of marbles. I cut all the buttons off so I could play too. When Mother found out what I had done I got a good whipping. They did not spare the rod in those days. It was a good lesson for me and Mother made me sew them all back on again. There were nearly 80.

The Bachelors Ball and the Michigan College of Mines Ball were two outstanding events held in June. How we loved to watch our older sisters getting ready to go to a ball. Weeks before, Mother would have our seamstress with

us making them some outfits and they were always so pretty. We girls were allowed to go to the armory where the dance was being held and look in from a large back entrance to watch the first dance, which was the grand march. After that we had to go home, but heard all about it the next day.

We all loved our school days. They were happy ones, and we were always glad when September came so we could see our new teachers. On stormy winter days each girl or boy would pack his or her lunch. Then we would call our friends and tell them to bring their lunch. We had no special room in those days like the nice cafeterias they have nowadays. We all went to the basement which was partially made into a playroom. Here we would eat, and of all places to pick from, we would sit around the pit where the janitor took out the ashes from the furnace. We would exchange food. This was fun. After we were finished eating, we would play games. One very familiar one was Puss in the Corner. In this basement there were as many as 16 pillars and we would all stand by a pillar and play Pussy wants a Corner. You were to exchange pillars; if you lost your pillar, you were the Cat. It was great fun. We formed a little club called the clean-up club and we would bring all kinds of smelly soap and ten cent perfume and clean our hands and faces.

We were all like one big family at school. When we were ready for first year high school we had to go to the town school about one and one-half miles away. Sometimes we would walk the distance, the weather permitting, or Dad would drive us to school. Across from this school lived Dad's sister, Aunt Gretchen, who we all loved dearly. We always had our noon lunch with her. She was a good German cook and we liked Friday noon lunch as she most generally gave us noodles and prunes or raspberries. On her pantry shelf

you could always find a jar of delicious white sugar cookies. We liked to visit on weekends at her home because she would let us play lady and dress in her old-fashioned clothes which she kept in a large cedar chest off her downstairs bedroom. They also had a beautiful yard and garden with many cherry and apple trees. I went to this high school through my senior year and graduated in 1906. In 1956 this was just about 50 years ago. I made a trip from Florida to Houghton to celebrate this wonderful anniversary. There were seven members in this class, and all are living.

❧ CHAPTER FIVE ❧

GOING BACK TO OUR HOME at The Park, we had many beautiful pheasants and two large moose which were sent in from Canada. We did not keep the moose very long as we did not like the odor, so Father got rid of them. When Dad would go on those long hunting trips we girls would take turns sleeping with Mother. This was so wonderful just to sleep in her soft warm bed, made of two feather quilts, and cuddle up close to her. When we girls first started to go to the dances and parties, Mother always went with us as chaperone. She loved to dance herself and was a beautiful dancer.

Sometimes when one of our younger friends would ask us to dance, Mother would say, "Do you mind dancing this dance with me?" They always danced with her and enjoyed it very much. We used to have what they called in the olden days, "Masquerades" where you come masked and in fancy costumes to represent someone. On one of these occasions Mother went masked. Father thought she had remained at

home, sick. She had only pretended this. While dancing, a very prominent man in the community said to Dad, "I just had a very lovely dance with your wife." Dad said, "Oh, no you did not, as she is home sick in bed." They argued and made a wager of \$1,000, and when it came time to unmask and Dad saw Mother, he certainly was surprised. He lost his bet, but had a chance to get it back on the following Presidential election. He bet with the same man the same amount, and won back what he had lost.

We loved to make picnic lunches and take them up in our park and invite other friends to join us. We always made buckets of lemonade and lots of sandwiches, hard boiled eggs, pickles, and other dishes suitable for outdoor eating. We very often made a bonfire and toasted marshmallows.

In this town of Houghton there were two excursion boats. One was owned and operated by the Croze family, and the other by the Henness family. Churches and other organizations would charter these boats and all families would pack large baskets of food and go for the day on a cruise on Portage Lake, either to the Entry where boats entered from the other great lake of Superior, or up to the Canal where the boats went on through Lake Superior to Duluth. Sometimes they went to Haas Park dock. We always liked it when they came to our place because they would put up booths and sell ice cream and cake, soft drinks, coffee, hot dogs, and hamburgers.

The Indians always came to our home to sell blueberries in large ten quart water pails. Mother always paid them one dollar. She gave them a lunch and clothing. They were very good Indians and we never had any trouble from them. Once you're a friend you are always a friend.

In the spring of the year a little German Band came to town and they would walk a mile and a half out to our place

to serenade us. Generally there were five in this little band. Mother gave them lunch and beer and always paid them enough to buy a few more meals while in town.

Near our home in East Houghton there was a community school. We all attended this school through the eighth grade. Then we had to go to the West Houghton school from which many of my sisters and brothers were graduated. I will never forget my high school days. We did not have automobiles then like the teenagers do today, but we had bicycles and got around just the same and made a lot of our own fun.

The Mining College in Houghton helped to make our great times. When it came time for the new boys to come to town prepared to enter college, we would go to town to see the new ones arrive. After the boys were settled about one month, they would have a large parade called the Night Shirt Parade. All the boys wore night shirts and carried a lighted torch and the bystanders would throw confetti while the band led the parade. It sure was great.

On Halloween we were allowed to go out and play. In East Houghton the girls and boys would go in a crowd to many places where the college boys roomed. They would come out and chase us for blocks, but we were never caught. We always had to be home by ten o'clock, then we enjoyed an hour of fun diving for apples from a large tub of water. Dad used to put dimes and quarters in the tub, but they were very hard to get.

Our oldest sister, Josephine Haas Dengler lived in Denver, Colorado. Mr. Dengler was a mining engineer, having graduated from the Michigan School of Mines. After two and a half years they returned to Houghton and he was made Superintendent of the Atlantic and Baltic mines. Later he was made General Superintendent of Ahmeek mines, located in Calumet, Michigan.



One of mother's parties . . . 65 years ago.



Author's baby picture.
Born October 11, 1887.



Rose's camp . . . August 5, 1956.
Vange Cummings writing on book.



The Author—Mrs. Evengeline H. Cummings
626 West Palm Street
Lantana, Florida.

❧ CHAPTER SIX ❧

WINTER PLAY at the Park was wonderful after a very heavy snowfall. It was a beautiful sight to see with all the ever-green trees covered with snow. We would stand under the spreading branches and shake them over one another until we were white with snow. It was so light and dry that it would shake off easily. The children all had snow shoes and we would tramp around the many acres making paths through the wood and fancy figures. Near the house we would build snowhouses. It was a lot of fun to play in them and crawl through the tunnels. Our first snowfall always reminded me of Longfellow's poem, *The Snow had begun in the gloaming and was busily all the night, heaping field and highway, with a silence deep and white.* This I remember as it was taught to me when I was a very young child.

On school days Dad would drive us to school. We had a good old faithful horse named Prince who was all black. He was a kind and gentle horse, and all the children could drive him. We had him for eighteen years, then Dad gave him to a farmer for retirement. For our winter driving we had what was called a jumper. The townspeople and the students called it "Noah's Ark." It was a large wooden sleigh with two seats facing each other and consisted of three buffalo robes, which kept us good and warm. As many as seven or eight could ride, and two would hitch their sleds on the back runners. After the school day was over, we walked home or hitched a ride on wood hauling sleighs. Upon arriving home, we would change into other clothes

or just our little white aprons we had over our dresses, as each one had his or her work to do such as ironing or darning socks. There were pies and cakes to bake; I always made the old-fashioned steam brown bread which was made from sour milk or buttermilk and which was steamed for three hours. The recipe called for two cups of graham flour, one cup of white flour, one cup of yellow cornmeal, one cup of molasses with one teaspoon of soda, one teaspoon of salt, and four cups of either milk or water. After steaming, it was placed in an oven for ten minutes to dry the top of the bread. It was generally placed in a pan such as an angel food tin so the center would bake through evenly.

Another task was churning the cream to make butter. We had a large earthen jar which stood on the floor with a paddle that worked up and down. You had to stand to do this, and it took us an hour or two. We would be so happy when we saw the little curds form into butter. This meant that soon it would be ready to mix into form. Then it was dipped into cold water several times to remove all buttermilk, then salted. We drank the buttermilk or used it for baking purposes for buttermilk pancakes, biscuits, and breads.

❧ CHAPTER SEVEN ❧

IN THE FALL OF THE YEAR we raked the leaves from under the maple and oak trees. After piling the leaves high, we would play in them. Then the leaves had to be bagged and stacked in a large barn and were used during the winter for bedding for the cattle. The deer were always out of doors and Dad built what is called a leanto. It was a three-sided

house with a roof. They would sleep there on cold nights, so we would put plenty of leaves in there for them. In the late winter and early spring the deer would shed their horns and the bucks were very cross. One day Dad went in their yard and a very angry deer went for him and pushed him into the cold icy water. The ice was not very strong, so he had a hard time trying to get out until help came. He was rushed to his bed and was quite ill for some time. Brother Frank made us sleds to slide on down the hills. They were made from two barrel stays nailed together with a cross-board in front and one in back. A rope was tied in front and we stood up to slide down, bracing one foot in front and one on the back runner. After using them for some time they would get pretty slippery, then we would sit down and not be afraid of falling off.

We had an old Indian friend who would sell my Father some moccasins. Each year he would make as many as 28 pairs. They were made from the skin of deer after they were dried, stretched, treated, and cut into shapes to fit different sizes of feet and woven with colored beads. They also made our snowshoes in all sizes to fit each one. These were some of our Christmas gifts, and we were delighted with them.

We all learned to skate very young, and when I grew up and was in high school I learned to play hockey, a very popular sport. We had two teams and would play Saturday mornings at our skating rink called The Amphidrome. Many teams came to play from other cities and Canada. Another popular sport was basketball. All the high schools in the county had girl teams. I played on the Houghton team my senior year; we were the Champions of 1906.

Ralph and Hulbert, my two younger brothers, would make us an ice rink as well as large snow men. This was great fun and we would stay and play so long that our mittens would almost freeze on our hands. We would go

inside and put our hands under cold water. Soon they would warm up and Mother would make us a hot drink of chocolate.

We always kept as many as ten or twelve barrels of apples in the basement or cold cellar. In the evenings, when it was time to do our school work, we would bring up a pan of these delicious apples. Each one would take a dish to her own room to eat while studying.

Making popcorn and molasses candy was a great winter treat. As time went on we had the stoves removed for a furnace and gas range. We missed the good old-fashioned wood and coal stoves. Preparing for Christmas was delightful. We started soon after Thanksgiving making cookies and fruit cakes. The cookies consisted of white ones covered with sugar and a dark molasses with sugar-coated pfernesses and sprengles. These were two German cookies and very good. The fruit cakes took considerable time. We all helped to crack the nuts and cut and soak the dried fruits for as many as 30 fruit cakes. We also made Hutzel Brot (in English this is pear bread). It is made from all dried fruits and nuts. Then we would pop corn and string it in long strands, cranberries also. We did much sewing and embroidering work for pin cushions and other gifts.

Christmas was a gay and happy time when our elder brother, Albert, played the part of Santa Claus. He dressed up in a fur coat and cap and red mittens, with a string of sleigh bells around his waist. He would come from the town about one and one-half miles away in a sleigh loaded down with presents, candy, and fruit. Mother met him at the door and always had a large pillow case or two filled with gifts she bought weeks before. It was around midnight, the time the smaller children were in bed asleep, because the older ones had to decorate the tree. This was a lot of work for two or three to do. The tree touched the

ceiling, and its spreading branches were very wide. Our tree was always considered the most beautiful with lighted candles, popcorn balls, strings of cranberries and popcorn, and long sticks of colored candy. There were also the multi-colored balls and ornaments, and we used tiny pieces of cotton batton to represent snow.

The children were awakened and came downstairs in their flannel nightgowns and warm sleepers. The first thing the children had to do was kneel on the floor in the living room and say their prayers. All presents were marked and Mother would help Santa read the names. We would go to Santa and thank him and wish him a very Merry Christmas. After the distributions of gifts Mother took him to the dining room and gave him lunch and hot coffee. We always went to midnight Mass, which seemed so long; nevertheless, it was beautiful to see all the decorations and hear the Christmas carols and songs. On our return home we always served a meal or banquet to extra friends and neighbors. Then we went off to bed at an early morning hour, about three o'clock.

Christmas dinner was served around six o'clock. We all helped Mother. She was an excellent manager and everything went off beautifully. During the holiday season Mother took us in turns, two or three at a time, to our respective relatives to see their gifts and trees and came home with more gifts.

After the long winter months, with people using so much wood, their chimneys had to be cleaned. There happened to be a chimney sweep man in our town who was a very tattered-looking person and who wore a very high cone shaped hat. He cleaned the chimneys by means of a long rope with a piece of flat iron attached to one end. This he would work up and down the chimney so the soot would rise and blow away. He would sing while doing this task:

Every night I go to bed
With a nightcap on my head
Not a word to me is said
Poor old maid.

We were always frightened when he came to our place due to his dirty appearance.

At this time of writing there are seven children living: Harriet Haas Renaud, age 83, living in Romeo, Michigan; Florence Haas O'Brien, age 80, Detroit, Michigan; Mata Haas Light, age 76, also Detroit; Rose Haas Schmidt, age 74, Saginaw, Michigan; Evangeline Haas Cummings, age 71, Lantana, Florida; Ralph C. Haas, age 68, Columbus, Ohio; Marcella Haas Arrowsmith, age 62, DeLand, Florida. Mr. and Mrs. Hilton Renaud are retired and are enjoying their children who are all married and have grand- and great grandchildren. My sister Florence is married to Patrick H. O'Brien, who was a Probate Judge, retired in 1957 at the remarkable age of eighty-nine, and is at the present time writing a book on Probate Court. Mrs. Light, at the good age of 76, retired and lives in Detroit. Mrs. H. Schmidt, age 74, retired and lives part-time in Saginaw and spends the summer and fall at her cottage in Tawas, Michigan, on Lake Huron, which she enjoys with her daughter Gretchen and Floyd Falkenhagen and four grandchildren. The only boy left in our large family is Ralph, who with his charming wife, Eleanor Balley Haas, lives in Columbus, Ohio. They are enjoying their two married daughters and grandchildren. Marcella Haas Arrowsmith, 62, now living in DeLand, Florida, was the youngest of the 16 children. Her husband is a builder. Evangeline Haas Cummings, widow, is residing in Lantana, Florida.

I was graduated from high school in 1906. I went to Marquette Normal, after which I taught school for seven

years. I married Alvin M. Cummings in 1913, a mining engineer and a graduate of the Michigan School of Mines. We had two sons, Lester Cummings, now an engineer for the State of Texas, and William Cummings, an accountant in Watertown, New York. Both sons are married and have lovely wives, and I enjoy visiting them and my three grandsons. In 1942 I moved to Florida where I have made my home. During the period of the war, 1942 and after, I worked at the Boca Raton and Morrison Field Air Base at West Palm Beach. I taught school at Rivera Beach and did catering, and these last two years I managed the Cafeteria for the Sacred Heart School in Lake Worth, Florida. At the present time I am enjoying my new home in Lantana, six miles south of Palm Beach.

I have spent the past few summers at my sister Rose Schmidt's camp in Tawas City on Lake Huron, one of the most beautiful of the Great Lakes. Here at camp, sitting around the breakfast table with my sister Rose and her family, reminds me of our young days at Haas Park. After breakfast each one has his or her duties to do—the dishes, beds, or bunks, or cleaning the rooms and bringing in the logs for the fireplace. It starts to get cool around four in the afternoon and my sister starts the fire in the fireplace. At noon we take a walk to get the mail. We are always glad to see the mailman and get letters and newspapers. The youngsters are always ready for a swim and then a rest and dinner.

After dark on a nice moonlit night we all play hide and seek with the children. Soon it is bedtime, time for a snack and hot milk or chocolate. The older ones play bridge or canasta. Now we have TV and there is never a dull moment at camp. Their father bought them a nice outboard motorboat and all are learning to drive and water ski. This is a great sport. I tried it myself, but after a good spill I thought it too strenuous a sport for me at my age.

This past summer I visited my younger son in Watertown. He was having his vacation at this time, so he took his family and me back to Mineville, New York, our old home town, where we had lived for 30 years. I saw many of my old friends. Now my plans are to go to Houston, Texas, to see my other older son, Lester. At this writing, January 23, 1958, I am in Houston with my son and his wife, Lillian, and one son, Charles. It has been a cold five weeks here as it has been a cold winter all over the States. I went to Galveston and Cameron and saw many sights of interest. Sunday I am going to Detroit and Saginaw. After a three weeks visit I shall return to my home in Lantana, Florida.

GENEALOGY

